



## POWER OUTAGES

Sudden power outages can be frustrating for all involved. You can take steps to reduce the impact on your home and family even if you do know how long the outage will last.

As a general rule, if a power outage is 2 hours or less, you need not be concerned about losing your perishable foods. For prolonged power outages, though, there are steps you can take to minimize food loss and to keep all members of your household as comfortable as possible

### What you should do before a power outage

1. To help preserve your food, keep the following supplies in your home:
  - One or more coolers—Inexpensive Styrofoam coolers work well.
  - Ice—surrounding your food with ice in a cooler or in the refrigerator will keep food colder for a longer period of time during a prolonged power outage.
  - A digital quick-response thermometer— with these thermometers you can quickly check the internal temperatures of food to ensure they are cold enough to use safely.
2. Put together an emergency preparedness kit with these supplies in case of a prolonged or widespread power outage:
  - Water—one gallon per person, per day (5- day supply)
  - Food—non-perishable, easy-to- prepare items (5-day supply)
  - Flashlight (*NOTE: Avoid using candles during a power outage due to the extreme risk of fire*)
  - Battery-powered or hand-crank radio (NOAA Weather Radio, if possible)
  - Extra batteries
  - First aid kit, medications (5-day supply) and medical items
  - Multi-purpose tool
  - Sanitation and personal hygiene items
  - Copies of personal documents (medication list and pertinent medical information, deed/lease to home, birth certificates, insurance policies)
  - Cell phone with chargers (you re-charge your phone in the car)
  - Family and emergency contact information

- Extra cash (multiple denominations is a good idea)
3. If someone in your home is dependent on electric-powered, life-sustaining equipment, remember to include backup power in your evacuation plan.
  4. Keep a non-cordless telephone in your home. It is likely to work even when the power is out.
  5. Never let the fuel in your car go below  $\frac{1}{2}$  a tank (in case you have to leave or make an emergency trip to a hospital, you will have enough fuel to get where you need to go)



### **What should I do during a power outage**

1. Keep food as safe as possible.
  - Keep refrigerator and freezer doors closed as much as possible. First use perishable food from the refrigerator. An unopened refrigerator will keep foods cold for about 4 hours.
  - Then use food from the freezer. A full freezer will keep the temperature for about 48 hours (24 hours if it is half full) if the door remains closed.
  - Use your non-perishable foods and staples after using food from the refrigerator and freezer.
  - If it looks like the power outage will continue beyond a day, prepare a cooler with ice for your freezer items.
  - Keep food in a dry, cool spot and keep it covered at all times.
2. Electrical equipment
  - Turn off and unplug all unnecessary electrical equipment, including sensitive electronics.
  - Turn off or disconnect any appliances (like stoves), equipment or electronics you were using when the power went out. When power comes back on, surges or spikes can damage equipment.
  - Leave one light turned on so you'll know when the power comes back on.
  - Eliminate unnecessary travel, especially by car. Traffic lights will be out and roads will be congested. Getting fuel will be extremely difficult without power for pumps or computers for tracking sales.
3. Using generators safely
  - When using a portable generator, always plug the equipment needing power directly into the outlets on the generator.
  - Do not connect a portable generator to a home's electrical system.
  - If you are considering getting a generator, get advice from a professional, such as an electrician. Make sure that the generator you purchase is rated for the power that you think you will need.

### **What should I do when the power comes back on**

**If you see any downed electrical power lines, stay away from them and keep your family away from them. Report downed power lines by calling 911.**

1. Throw out unsafe food.

- Throw away any food that has been exposed to temperatures 40° F (4° C) for 2 hours or more or that has an unusual odor, color or texture. When in doubt, throw it out!
- Never taste food or rely on appearance or odor to determine its safety. Some foods may look and smell fine, but if they have been at room temperature too long, bacteria causing food-borne illnesses can start growing quickly. Some types of bacteria produce toxins that cannot be destroyed by cooking.
- If food in the freezer is colder than 40° F and has ice crystals on it, you can refreeze it.
- If you are not sure food is cold enough, take its temperature with the food thermometer. Throw out any foods (meat, poultry, fish, eggs and leftovers) that have been exposed to temperatures higher than 40° F (4° C) for 2 hours or more, and any food that has an unusual odor, color or texture, or feels warm to touch.

2. Use Caution:

- Carbon Monoxide Kills - Never use a generator, grill, camp stove or other gasoline, propane, natural gas or charcoal-burning devices inside a home, garage, basement, crawlspace or any partially enclosed area. Locate unit away from doors, windows and vents that could allow carbon monoxide to come indoors.
- The primary hazards to avoid when using alternate sources for electricity, heating or cooking are carbon monoxide poisoning, electric shock and fire.
- Install carbon monoxide alarms in central locations on every level of your home and outside sleeping areas to provide early warning of accumulating carbon monoxide.
- If the carbon monoxide alarm sounds, move quickly to a fresh air location outdoors or by an open window or door.
- Call for help from the fresh air location and remain there until emergency personnel arrive to assist you

3. Energy Conservation Recommendations

- Turn off lights and computers when not in use.
- Wash clothes in cold water if possible; wash only full loads and clean the dryer's lint trap after each use.
- When using a dishwasher, wash full loads and use the light cycle. If possible, use the rinse only cycle and turn off the high temperature rinse option. When the regular wash cycle is done, just open the dishwasher door to allow the dishes to air dry.
- Replace incandescent light bulbs with energy-efficient compact fluorescent lights

4. Let Your Family Know You're Safe

If your community experiences a disaster, let your family and friends know how you are doing.

For additional information on emergency preparedness, please visit any of the following on-line resources:

**City of Long Beach Emergency Phone Numbers:**

**Emergencies Dial 911**

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|------------------------|--------------|
| • Gas Department:      | 562.570.2140 |
| • Water and Sewer:     | 562.570.2390 |
| • Public Works:        | 562.570.2700 |
| • Police Non-Emergency | 562.435.6711 |
| • Fire Non-Emergency   | 562.570.9400 |

**Social Media:**

You can also sign up for any of the City of Long Beach social media accounts and receive updates on the City's disaster responses, as well as information to assist you.

[www.facebook.com/CityofLongBeachCA](http://www.facebook.com/CityofLongBeachCA)

<https://twitter.com/LongBeachCity>

[www.youtube.com/user/LongBeachCityCA](http://www.youtube.com/user/LongBeachCityCA)

